Lat 39.36073 Lon -120.76941

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File Code: 3420 **Date:** September 23, 1998

Route To: 2430

Subject: Diplodia Blight on Ponderosa Pine in and around Nevada City and Western Gall Rust around Washington, Evaluation # NE98-10

To: District Ranger, Nevada City RD, Tahoe NF

At the request of Gary Cline, Nevada Ranger District, I examined ponderosa pine in and around Nevada City to determine if they had pine pitch canker. On August 27, Gary gave me branch samples and showed me diseased ponderosa pine in Nevada City and upstream from the town of Washington on the South Yuba River. In consulting with state pest specialists, Don Owen and Tim Tidwell, the problem with the trees in Nevada City is Diplodia blight caused by the fungus Sphaeropsis sapinea and not pine pitch canker as suspected.

I am enclosing the May 1998 issue of *Tree Notes,* by Don Owen, which thoroughly discusses Diplodia blight. The current outbreak is a result of wet Spring weather. The disease is infecting individual pine trees scattered throughout lower elevations. Most of the pine should recover. A few heavily infected trees may die as a result of reinfection over several growing seasons.

Some ponderosa pine above Washington were infected with western gall rust caused by the fungus Peridermium harknessii. This rust is a native which infects ponderosa, lodgepole and Monterey pine. Western gall rust in the Washington area is favored by the higher humidity around the river and streams. The rust forms globose galls which slowly girdle branches and stems. This disease is most damaging in young pine. Trunk cankers can deform and reduce the strength of the main stem. Commonly on mature trees only a few branches are affected. When managing forests, heavily infected trees and trees with large trunk galls can be removed. Non-host conifers can be favored in areas where western gall rust is prevalent. If desired, dead

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branches can be pruned from trees in recreation areas. The amount of western gall rust infection I saw in the Washington area does not require special treatment.

If you have any questions, please contact me by IBM e-mail (wwoodruf/r5,lassen) or phone (530) 252-6680.

BILL WOODRUFF
Plant Pathologist, Forest Pest Management
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Enclosure